

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

December 29, 2009

The Honorable Donald E. Williams, Jr.
Senate President Pro Tempore
Legislative Office Building, Room 3300
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Martin M. Looney
Senate Majority Leader
Legislative Office Building, Room 3300
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Christopher G. Donovan
Speaker of the House
Legislative Office Building, Room 4100
Hartford, CT 06106

The Honorable Denise W. Merrill
House Majority Leader
Legislative Office Building, Room 4100
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senators Williams and Looney, and Representatives Donovan and Merrill,

On behalf of the House and Senate Republican caucuses, we write to express our concern about the lack of progress made in addressing our state's budget crisis, and in the majority's decision to postpone further action on the deficit until February.

The *Hartford Courant* reported today that "Democrat leaders would huddle over their options and respond to Rell's vetoes in some form when the legislative session begins in about a month."

We have two overriding concerns with this approach:

1. It implies that budget discussions will continue to happen behind closed doors and in a completely partisan way. **Partisan approaches to solving this budget crisis have not worked.** Not only has partisanship contributed to public cynicism, it has repeatedly failed to produce a mitigation plan that actually closes the deficit.

2. It lacks the sense of urgency this crisis demands and the people of Connecticut expect. As we have learned repeatedly over the past year, the longer we wait to address our budget crisis, the bigger our deficit grows and the more limited our options for dealing with it become.

Governor Rell has done her part in making rescissions and offering real spending cuts to the extent her executive authority allows. Unless and until the legislature extends the Governor's rescission authority, the budget crisis remains the legislature's problem.

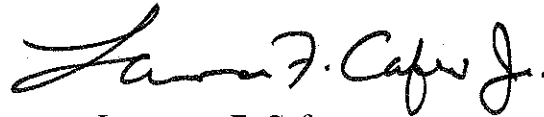
We believe it is past time to return to the negotiating table in an open and bipartisan way. Bipartisan talks between Democrat and Republican legislative leaders should begin immediately and all relevant staff should be made available to help facilitate a resolution.

We have a responsibility to the people of Connecticut to work together, reevaluate everyone's best ideas for balancing the budget, compromise, and agree on a way forward.

Our members and staff are ready and willing to work with you toward a bipartisan resolution. We urge you to work with us, and we look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,


John McKinney
Senate Republican Leader


Lawrence F. Cafero
House Republican Leader

Cc: The Honorable M. Jodi Rell, Governor
All Connecticut State Legislators